



ELLIS COUNTY & DISTRICT ATTORNEY

M. ANN MONTGOMERY

ELLIS COUNTY COURTS BUILDING • 109 S. JACKSON • WAXAHACHIE, TX 75165 • (972) 825-5035 • FAX (972) 825-5047

August 11, 2023

Maximum Sentence for Getzendaner Park Rapist

Ellis County and District Attorney Ann Montgomery announced that Rolando D. Becks, 33, of Waxahachie, Texas, was convicted of sexual assault and sentenced to the maximum of 20 years in prison on August 10, 2023.

On May 29, 2020, at about 11:00 a.m., Beck's victim, "Maria" went to Getzendaner Park to walk the hiking trail behind the little bridge. She passed Becks as she entered the trail. He was a stranger to her. As Maria walked back to her vehicle, she noticed Becks to her right. Becks suddenly tackled her to the ground and sexually assaulted her. During the assault, Maria suffered 109 scratches and bruises on her body. Becks fled from the scene because Maria was screaming. A construction worker on northbound I-35 told officers that he saw a man fitting Becks description run out of the trail heading towards the hotels on Brookside. At the time Becks was living at one of the motels. Since Becks matched the description that both Maria and the construction worker gave officers, he became a person of interest in her sexual assault.

On July 21, 2020, Becks was arrested for unlawful possession of a firearm by felon. Becks gave a statement to Detective Elizabeth Glidewell of the Waxahachie Police Department. Becks told Glidewell, "I know I'm a felon, I don't care," admitting that he was a felon and carrying a firearm. He also told Glidewell that he was at the park to sell drugs on May 29, 2020. Becks told her that he did not rape Maria, and he explained that it was a consensual sexual encounter. Becks admitted that he ran from the scene, but stated he ran because he was startled by a bicyclist and started "running for his life."

After four days of testimony, the jury returned a guilty verdict for sexual assault and sentenced Becks to 20 years in prison, the maximum provided by law. A previous jury on February 3, 2023, convicted Becks of unlawful possession of a firearm by a felon and sentenced him to 6 years in prison. 443rd District Judge Cindy Ermatinger, who presided over the sexual assault case, ordered that both sentences be served consecutively.

"Stranger rape is a rare but dangerous crime. Ellis County citizens should not have to fear for their safety when enjoying our community parks," said Montgomery. "My hope is that one day Maria will find the strength to walk the trail again."

Assistant County and District Attorney—Felony Chief Grace Pandithurai and Assistant County and District Attorney Sherry Roeder tried the case, assisted by Investigator Todd Woodruff and Victims Assistance Coordinators Jamie Morales and Terri Shumaker. The case was investigated by lead investigator Detective Elizabeth Glidewell of the Waxahachie Police Department.

